

**Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association
General Membership Meeting
February 11, 2018
Izatys Resort, Onamia, MN**

The Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association held its Quarterly General Membership meeting Sunday, February 11, 2018 at Izatys Resort in Onamia, Minnesota, in connection with the annual Winter Rendezvous.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Seibel at 8:02 AM. Present were Executive Board members: President Rod Seibel, Vice President Greg Sorensen, Secretary Rick Johnson, Treasurer Scott Wakefield, and Director-at-Large Mark Kavanaugh.

Introduction of Executive Board and Guests - The Executive Board members introduced themselves. Also present were MnUSA Lobbyists Doug Franzen and Christian Franzen; Laura Preus and Andrew Korsberg from DNR Parks & Trails Central Office; Rodmen Smith and Bruce Lawrence from DNR Enforcement, and Tim Edgeton from DNR Parks & Trails Sauk Rapids office.

Approval of Agenda – Motion by Randy Laberge, seconded by Mark LaBaw to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report — Motion by Mark LaBaw, seconded by Charles Chadbourne to approve the secretary's report as written. Motion carried.

Officers' Reports:

President's Report: Rod Seibel reported that he has been traveling around northern Minnesota visiting with snowmobilers and talking about MnUSA and snowmobile issues.

Vice President's Report: Greg Sorenson reported on the Blizzard Tour (ALS ride) this past weekend. 217 riders participated and over \$1,000,000 was raised. There was good snow in the area of the Iron Range, not so good around the Duluth area. Greg thanks all the clubs that groomed the trails in preparation for this event.

Treasurer's Report: Scott Wakefield reported on the Waconia Ride-In vintage event. Each year they have a snowmobile auction for charity. This year they raised over \$18,500 which was donated to ALS.

Director At Large Report: Mark Kavanaugh reported that he has participated in many of the planning meetings for the 2018 Rendezvous and is working on a location for the 2019 event.

Business Coordinator's Report: Nancy Hanson reported on the following projects:

- The Veteran's Appreciation Ride was moved from Paynesville to Silver Bay due to lack of snow. Approximately 100 riders, with 30 of the sleds supplied by the manufacturers and dealers, enjoyed the ride. Some of the new riders have also become motorcycle enthusiasts. They are looking forward to bringing others in their motorcycle clubs with next year to introduce them to snowmobiling. Hope is to move back to Paynesville next year. Greg Sorenson interjected with kudos for the Arctic Cat representatives who worked in extreme cold to repair the semi-trailer loading mechanism so that the factory sleds could be accessed.

- Website progress is slow but moving along. Directors will need a password to access certain features such as meeting minutes.

- The Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee will be conducting a series of open houses around the state on how parks and trails legacy funds have been spent to date and funding for projects in the future. These open houses will give us an opportunity to provide direction for parks and trails legacy funding in the future. The dates and location of the open house events can be found on MnUSA's website.

-Recreational Trails Program funding. The deadline for this year's grant applications is February 28th. Trail enthusiasts across the US are joining together to request their federal legislators to continue support this program and to increase the percentage of federal off-road gas tax that goes into the program.

Legislative/Trails Report: Doug Franzen

-General: The Legislature convenes on February 20 and runs through May 21. Priority bills will be action to fund the operation of the legislature due to the Governor's line-item veto of last session, and bills to bring Minnesota's tax structure in conformity to the Federal changes.

-Nancy Hanson attended a fund-raiser sponsored by Doug for Rep. Greg Davids, Chair of the House Tax Committee. Rep. Davids is the author of the bill to exempt sales tax on trail building materials purchased for GIA trails.

-60/40 funding split from snowmobile dedicated funds: Rep. Fabian has requested a Memorandum of Understanding with the DNR on the 60/40 split or make it statutory. The MOU would have almost as much power as statutory action.

-Single color for registration stickers: Hopefully this can be worked out within the Department without the need for legislation.

-Training materials discount: A bill will be introduced to increase the funding allowed to clubs for safety training to take into account the additional cost of providing the online training at a discounted rate to students.

-ATVs on GIA trails: There may be legislation introduced to allow tracked ATVs on GIA trails during the snowmobile season. By definition of a snowmobile this is not legal.

-Vintage/Collector Sleds: The legislative priority position adopted by the Board of Directors at the Fall Workshop to change the definition of a vintage sled from 25 years old to sleds manufactured in 1989 and earlier will be reviewed at the Directors' meeting. Collector sled registrations have already been issued for sleds up to the 1993 year.

-Tragic death of an 8 year old boy on Chisago Lake: This incident was caused by a drunk, not by a snowmobiler. MnUSA continues to support "Ride Safe, Ride Sober" and will be vigilant to guard against overreaction by the Legislature, working with other stakeholders to respond as the opportunity arises.

-Contributions to individual candidates: Doug made an appeal for all members to contribute to the candidate of his/her choice and identify yourself as a snowmobiler. \$50 for individuals or \$100 for a married couple is fully refundable. Candidates will provide the receipts and there is a form available on-line to apply for a refund.

-Legislative Reception: MnUSA's Legislative Reception will be held at the Capitol Ridge Event Center (the old Kelly Inn) on March 28, 2018 from 4:30 to 7:00 PM.

DNR Reports:

Parks and Trails: Laura Preus and Andrew Korsberg.

-Handouts were distributed containing a fact sheet on what the DNR does for snowmobiling in Minnesota, and summarizing the financial status of the Snowmobile Account. They are cautiously optimistic that if present trends continue, it there may be no cuts to the 3rd and/or 4th Benchmark payments.

-DNR's survey of snowmobilers is going out in April. From time to time DNR surveys each of its user groups to get information on use and for planning.

-DNR is conducting in-house workshops on possible ways to make the snowmobiling program more sustainable. Background information will be shared with MnUSA at a Minnesota Snowmobile Advisory Committee (MSAC) meeting in March.

Enforcement: Rodmen Smith, Director.

-Tragic death of an 8 year old boy on Chisago Lake: People overreact - "A drunk killed a kid". It isn't snowmobiling on trial. There is a wide variation in application of Driving under Influence (DUI) laws depending on the vehicle involved.

-Tracked ATVs: His office has been contacted regarding of these vehicles on GIA trails. Their response included not complying with the definition of a snowmobile and landowner concerns.

- Sticker color issue – DNR is negotiating with a new vendor for licensing. There is an opportunity to address this problem with a new program.

-Registration Violations: An internal memo went out if you come across a registration violation, write it; if multiple violations, write both. They have seen a 20% increase in tickets.

- Vintage sled rules are on the honor system. Smith is willing to work with MnUSA on any change in statute language.

- Fatalities so far this year: Not counting the 8-year old, there have been 1 male and 2 female fatalities. Two were alcohol related and involved hitting fixed objects, and the third is still under investigation

Minnesota Snowmobile Education & Advancement Fund (MSEAF): Larry Shepherd (absent) See Business Coordinator Report on Veterans Appreciation Ride

Committee Reports:

Membership: Jerry Hanson

-Holding our own on numbers.

-Membership material boxes have been sent out to Regions and are available for event booths.

-The Members Recruiting Members program is ongoing. Members and clubs can receive \$1 per new member they recruit.

Charity/Awards: Congratulations to the following award recipients:

Snowmobile Club of the Year – North Country Snowmobile Club, Bemidji

Snowmobiler of the Year – Steve Hohag, St. Michael

Snowmobile Dealer of the Year – Heinen's Motorsports, Osseo

Youth Snowmobiler of the Year – Kaitlyn Tennyson, Bemidji

The 2018 scholarship applications are due March 31. The application is available on the MnUSA website - <https://mnsnowmobiler.org/discover/programs/scholarship-program>

Communications: Scott Wakefield

-Magazine publishing contract is up for renewal in April. The committee will be meeting in April to discuss the provisions of the contract. There will be an opportunity for a survey in the magazine to inform members of candidates' position on snowmobile issues

Safety: Greg Sorenson

-Governor proclaimed January 20-28 as Snowmobile Safety Awareness Week

-Working on helmet sticker medical information. Grant needed to finance.

-Ride Guide should be available soon.

Site Selection: MarkLaBaw

-See Old Business

Old Business:

Spring Meeting: April 27-29, 2018 at Arrowwood Lodge, Baxter

Summer Event: July 15, 2018 in Little Falls, Region 3 sponsor

Fall Convention and Workshop: October 26-28, 2018, Region 1 sponsor. Will be in Bemidji, exact location TBD

2019 Winter Rendezvous: No bids yet, will likely be in the Brainerd area

Take a Friend Snowmobiling Campaign, January 1-March 31, 2018

New Business: None**Region Reports and Membership Activities:**

Region 1: Jim Folz: Bemidji is looking at 2020 for Rendezvous and they are working on the 2018 Fall Workshop. Their new director is Dale Dahlen. They have good snow in most of their region.

Region 2: Jack White: Their annual meeting will be the first Saturday in April. They have good riding in their region.

Region 3: Tom Jann: They have been working with the Rendezvous committee and thanks to all participating clubs. They are planning summer meetings as a one-day affair in Little Falls, and will get information out on lodging and campgrounds.

Region 4: Absent.

Region 5: Mike Clevenger: They have limited snow throughout the region. Some clubs have been grooming weekly. Clubs are actively recruiting members with some offering gift certificates to those that recruit the most new members.

Region 6: David Murphy: Their region is quiet on grooming. Two shelters are being moved due to local parks & rec requirements. Economic impact information provided by MnUSA has spurred interest in snowmobiling in the city and they want to meet with the club on how to become a snowmobile friendly city.

Region 7: Randy LaBerge: Clubs have been grooming since Christmas. Hosted Vets ride on short notice. Thanks to all that helped.

Region 8: Mark LaBaw: Introduced Marc Dahlquist as a returning Director. Their region participated in the Toys for Tots Drive. Losing trails to developers is an increasing problem. The Waconia club and other clubs in the region worked on the Waconia Ride-In where they had record attendance with over 7000 participants. The Chaska club is getting ready for its annual chili feed fundraiser with the proceeds going to a local snowmobiler's medical needs. There will be snowmobile demo rides on Prior Lake on February 18.

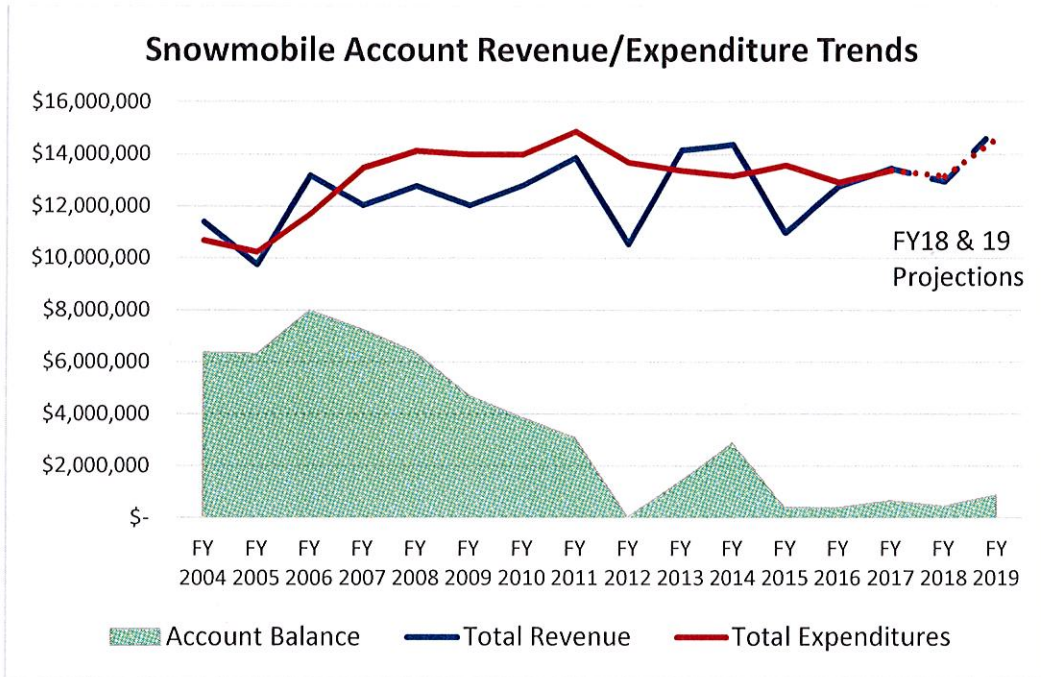
Region 9: Chuck Chadbourne: Most of their northern trails are rideable. They had considerable tree damage due to 2 bad wind storms.

Adjournment: Motion by Mark LaBaw, second by Jim Folz to adjourn. Motion Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

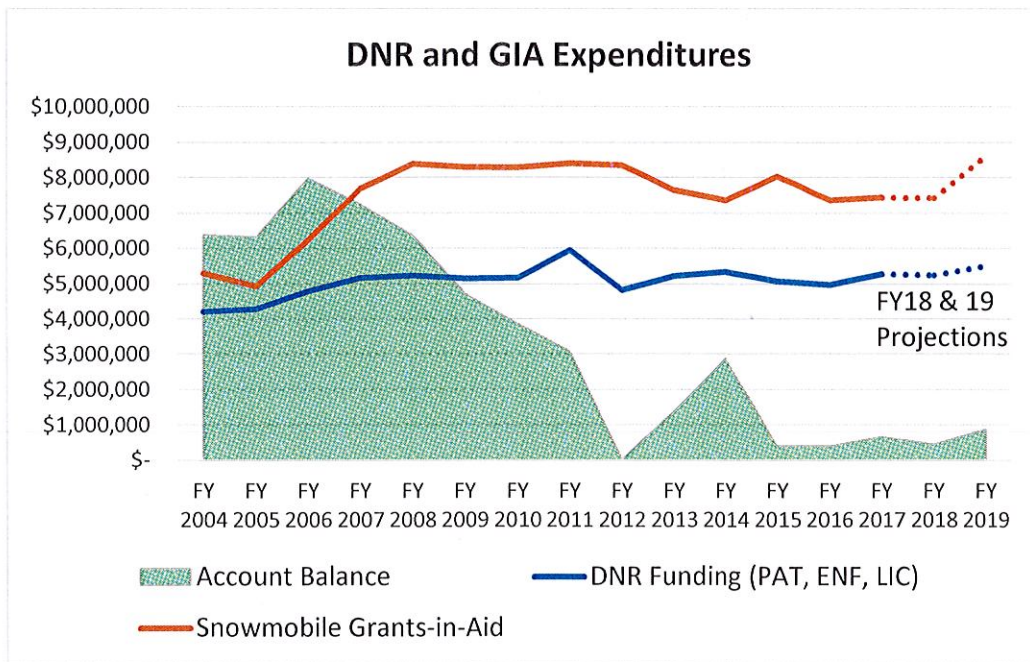
Rick Johnson, Secretary

Snowmobile Account Summary

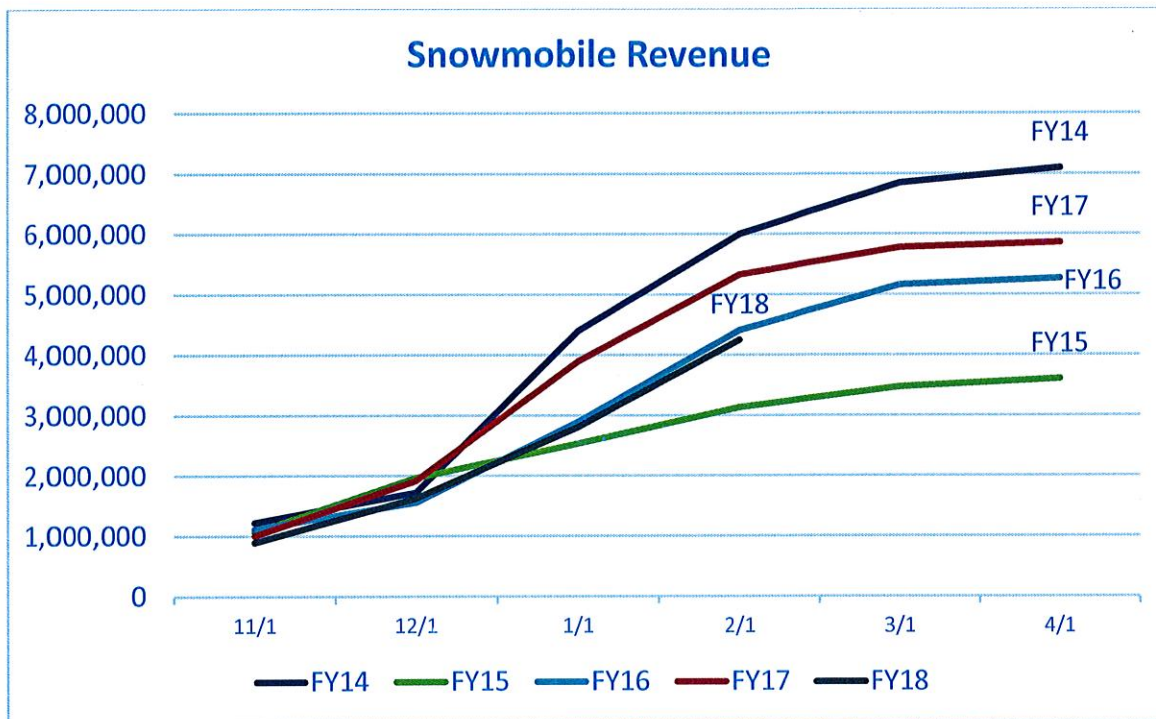


DNR and GIA Expenditure Trends

The DNR has managed GIA and DNR expenditures to keep the snowmobile account balance from going into the negative.



2018 Snowmobile Revenue Update



Revenue is in line with expectations

- Snowmobile registration revenue for the 2017-2018 season is in line with projections.
- We are hoping for the final revenue number to be close to \$5.4 million, which is an estimate based on the number of snowmobiles up for renewal.

We are hoping for no impact on the 3rd or 4th benchmark

- Given that revenues are currently in line with projections, we are hoping not to have an impact to the 3rd or 4th benchmark.
- It is hard to know if the weather might change in February or March, so we need to wait and see what final numbers are before making a final decision.

DNR will work with MnUSA and the Minnesota Snowmobile Advisory Committee (MSAC)

- As always, DNR will work with MnUSA Leaders and MSAC on funding decisions.
- An MSAC meeting is being planned for March.

DNR Does Important Work for Snowmobiling in Minnesota

DNR grooms and maintains about 1,000 miles of state trails

- State trails are snowmobile superhighways that receive some of the heaviest use in Minnesota and require more grooming and maintenance than most GIA trails.
- These trails are mostly in northeastern Minnesota, and include the Taconite, Arrowhead, North Shore, and Munger.
- State trails provide major connections between GIA trail systems and are an extremely valuable recreational resource for snowmobilers.
- The DNR has an aging snowmobile groomer fleet, older on average than many GIA clubs, and there is a significant need to continue prudent groomer replacements, which can cost almost \$200,000.
- In lower snow years, the DNR returns any unspent funds to the snowmobile program, which is in contrast to the GIA performance based program.

DNR supports the Grant-in-Aid trail system

DNR work for the grant-in-aid trail system is far beyond standard grant “administration” and includes many boots on the ground support, including but not limited to the following list.

- DNR meets with landowners, local units of government, snowmobile clubs, and others to support snowmobiling across the state, with a special focus on managing snowmobile use and related issues on state land.
- DNR purchases and distributes the majority of the snowmobile trail signs for over 22,000 miles of trail each year.
- DNR manages snowmobile mapping and route information and manages the state’s main website for snowmobile information, which receives about 100,000 visits each year.
- DNR conducts trail monitoring and oversight, and responds to grooming complaints, ensuring that the clubs are meeting performance benchmarks.
- DNR works with the legislature and on policy to support successful snowmobiling.
- DNR processes the grant-in-aid program contracts and payments, ensuring GIA Program accountability in grants and public funding.

DNR enforces state law and supports safety

- Conservation Offices enforce Minnesota snowmobile laws.
- DNR Enforcement coordinates snowmobile safety training, including training snowmobile safety instructors and running a program that trains thousands of youth on snowmobile laws and safe operation.
- DNR administers a grant program to local law enforcement agencies supporting snowmobile enforcement in many communities statewide.

DNR manages snowmobile licensing

- DNR administers all of the state’s licensing and permit system.
- DNR license center ensures that the 183,000 snowmobile registrations, renewals, and transfers are processed efficiently and paid into the snowmobile account.